



TOWN OF BERWYN HEIGHTS

Prince George's County, Maryland

Incorporated in 1896 ~ Sixth Oldest Municipality in PG County

TOWN MEETING MINUTES

JULY 8, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Jodie Kulpa-Eddy, Mayor Pro Tem (MPT) Chris Rasmussen, CMs Patricia Dennison, and Maria R. CM Anthony Schreiber had an excused absence. Also present were Town Administrator (TA) Jessica Cowles, Chief of Police Kenneth Antolik, Treasurer Suzan Clerk Kerstin Harper and citizens.

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. SWEARING-IN

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy said that the Council selected Maria Robles to fill the Council vacancy left by Mayor Calvo's resignation. Four well qualified residents applied were interviewed at the July 6 worksession. She welcomed Ms. Rita Robinson, a representative of the Clerk of the Circuit Court, to perform the swearing-in.

Ms. Robinson swore in Maria Robles as Councilmember of the Town of Berwyn Heights. CM Robles introduced herself. She said that she has lived in Berwyn Heights since 2003, and became active in the Berwyn Heights Elementary School PTA in 2004, serving alternately as treasurer and as vice president. She has also been in the Boys & Girls Club, serving first as a soccer coach and more recently as treasurer. She has long felt a calling to serve her community, and decided to step into the Council when the opportunity became available.

2. MINUTES

Clerk Harper read a summary of the June 10 Town meeting minutes. On a motion by CM Dennison and second by MPT Rasmussen, the minutes were approved 4 to 1.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Lape gave the Treasurer's report for the month of June. In response to Mayor Kulpa-Eddy, Ms Lape explained that the public safety reserve fund is not in this report because some corrections need to be made.

4. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy asked for a moment of silence to commemorate the passing of Charles Hall, a long time Berwyn Heights resident and valued Town employee who had served as a part-time code officer since 2006.

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reported that the Council held an additional worksession on June 25 to award contracts for the emergency generators project and the Safe Routes to School sidewalks project. The emergency generators were budgeted at \$160,000, with half of the funds coming from a State bond bill and half from the Town. The winning bid from America's Best came in at \$114,000, well below the budget. The Safe Routes to School project was budgeted at \$62,000 and the contract was awarded to E&R Services, who came in with the low bid of \$66,000. TA Cowles asked the grant maker SHA whether it would adjust the grant to cover the bid and add engineering expenses. SHA agreed. The Town will be able to start constructing the sidewalks in the 8900 block of 63rd Avenue before the next school is in session.

Mayor Kulpa Eddy announced Prince George's County will hold a zoning rewrite meeting open to the public on July 25, 2015. Attendees can learn how zoning codes have shaped the communities in which they live. The wholesale revision of the County's zoning code is likely to have significant impact on the future development of Prince George's communities. On July 29, the Four Cities Coalition will meet in Berwyn Heights. A representative from the Department of Permitting, Inspection and Enforcement (DPIE) will give an overview of the Department and its functions. The Four Cities are interested in exploring how the permitting process can be streamlined. Lastly, residents are reminded that a reception for former Mayor Calvo will be held on July 10 at the Town Center.

5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Administration: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reported, with Ms. Robles' coming on the Council, Councilmembers' departmental responsibilities will be adjusted. Departmental assignments will be announced at the August Town meeting. The Administration Department reports that FY 2015 revenues came in above budget and some bills are still outstanding. The FY 2015 audit will begin shortly, with TA Cowles as the main point of contact.

Mayor Kulpa-Eddy continued that she, MPT Rasmussen, and CM Schreiber attended this year's MML conference, along with TA Cowles and Director Lockley. She was the flag bearer for Berwyn Heights in the opening ceremony, and attended workshops on community policing, blighted properties, ordinance writing, as well as sessions focused on small towns. She also participated in the cabinet round table and had a conversation with the Secretary of the Transportation Department. On behalf of the Town, she thanked him for the Safe Routes to School grant and raised issues relating to the Kenilworth Avenue/ Pontiac Street intersection.

Code Compliance: MPT Rasmussen congratulated Mayor Kulpa-Eddy and TA Cowles on securing additional funding for the Safe Routes to School project. He noted that June saw a significant increase in high grass violations as a result of frequent rains and asked residents to try to keep up with grass cutting. Since the arrival of a new code supervisor, code activity has gone up, not only in the amount of citations issued, but also in building permits issued and rental homes inspected. MPT Rasmussen also recognized the late Charles Hall. Mr. Hall had put in many additional hours as a Code officer to help lead the Code Department through the periods when it was short staffed and without a supervisor.

MPT Rasmussen gave an overview of the workshops he attended at the MML conference. They included sessions on the Maryland economy, emergency communications, strategic planning and an interesting session on cops, liability and videotape, a topic the Council discussed during a spring budget meeting.

Parks and Recreation, Education and Civic Affairs: CM Dennison conveyed her condolences to the Hall Family. She then thanked the Recreation Commission for organizing the Town-wide yard sale and Tim Tormoen for publishing the yard sale map. Tomorrow, the 4th annual Lake Artemesia concert with the Susan Jone Quartet will take place. In case of rain, the concert will be held at the Town Center.

Public Health and Safety: Chief Antolik welcomed CM Robles and then gave the police activities report for June. There were 6 Part I offenses, which is slightly below the 5 year average of 5.6. The year-to-date total of 32 was below the 5 year average of 34.4. The Police also issued a total of 204 municipal and state citation 39 speed camera tickets, all on Greenbelt Road. Chief Antolik and his officers completed 40 hours of in-service training.

In other news, the Police and NW/EP will host the 32nd National Night Out on August 4. MPT Rasmussen will act as master of ceremony. Further, the Department is auctioning off one of its surplus police vehicles after purchasing and outfitting the two new vehicles budgeted for FY 2016. The Department is also implementing a new category of fines for failure to display license plates in front and rear. Officers have been issuing tickets.

Public Works: As CM Schreiber was absent, Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reported on Public Works activities. The Department hired Clinton Lewis as a crewman II and Ni Howard as a new administrative assistant. Gary Stanton was named employee of the month for June.

During free tipping day on June 25, the Department was able to dispose of 27 ½ tons of trash for a savings of \$1,600. A new trash schedule has gone into effect which combines the second weekly pickup on Thursdays and eliminates Friday pickups entirely. Residents, who are still setting trash out on Fridays, have been given copy notices, but no fines have been issued yet. The quarterly electronics recycling day will be held on July 25.

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Neighborhood Watch/Emergency Preparedness: Mayor Kulpa-Eddy reported that NW/EP is getting ready for National Night Out on August 4. On August 1 and Committee will hold Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training classes. Mike Attick is taking registrations. The next meeting will be held on September and a disaster drill is planned for later in September.

Recreation Council: Reported under Department Reports.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

8. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

9. CITIZENS DISCUSSION

Joan Ahrens, Seminole Place, thanked all the residents who applied for the vacant Council seat and congratulated Maria Robles on her appointment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Signed: *Kerstin Harper, Town Clerk*

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